

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A packaging apparatus that manufactures a package wherein ~~[[an]]~~ a foodstuff article to be packaged and an inert ~~[[a]]~~ gas are sealed in a ~~flexible~~ packaging material, ~~comprising: wherein~~

an introducing unit through which the article to be packaged and the gas are supplied to the packaging material formed in a tubular shape; and

a first sealing mechanism that seals the tubular packaging material to manufacture a package containing the article and the gas;

the gas having said package is manufactured wherein said gas having a temperature lower than different from that of the outside air when said first sealing mechanism seals the tubular package material and said article to be packaged are sealed.

2. (Currently Amended) The packaging apparatus as recited in Claim 1, comprising:

a gas temperature modifying unit that changes ~~a~~ the temperature of ~~a~~ the gas.

3. (Currently Amended) The packaging apparatus as recited in Claim 2, wherein ~~1, comprising:~~

the ~~the~~ ~~[[a]]~~ gas temperature modifying unit ~~that~~ changes the temperature of the gas by changing the temperature of the article to be packaged.

4. (Currently Amended) The packaging apparatus as recited in Claim 2, wherein ~~1, comprising:~~

the ~~the~~ ~~[[a]]~~ gas temperature modifying unit ~~that~~ changes the temperature of the gas by changing the temperature of the ~~flexible~~ packaging material.

5. (Currently Amended) The packaging apparatus as recited in Claim 2, wherein ~~1, comprising:~~

~~an introducing unit that introduces said article to be packaged and the gas inside the flexible packaging material; and~~

the ~~[[a]]~~ gas temperature modifying unit ~~that~~ changes the temperature of the gas by changing the temperature of said introducing unit.

6. (Currently Amended) The packaging apparatus as recited in Claim 1, comprising:

a forming unit that tubularly forms the flexible packaging material, ~~and introduces the article to be packaged and the gas inside the flexible packaging material tubularly formed;~~ and

a gas temperature modifying unit that changes the temperature of the gas by changing the temperature of said forming unit.

7. (Currently Amended) The packaging apparatus as recited in ~~any one claim of Claim 1 through Claim 6~~, further comprising:

a control unit that is configured to control ~~controls~~ the temperature and amount of the gas in the sealed package.

8. (Currently Amended) The packaging apparatus as recited in ~~any one claim of Claim 1 through Claim 7~~, wherein:

the gas sealed inside the sealed package ~~flexible packaging material~~ has a temperature lower than that of the outside air.

9. (Currently Amended) The packaging apparatus as recited in Claim 1, ~~[[8,]]~~ further comprising:

~~a sealing unit that hermetically seals the flexible packaging material by sealing the flexible packaging material tubularly formed; and~~

a pair of smoothing parts that smoothes a portion of the ~~flexible~~ packaging material to be sealed, and a vicinity thereof.

10. (Currently Amended) The packaging apparatus as recited in Claim 1, further comprising:

a transporting unit that transports the ~~flexible~~ tubular packaging material ~~tubularly formed downward;~~ and

a second longitudinal sealing unit that seals a longitudinal edge of the tubular packaging material, the longitudinal edge being parallel to the transport direction of the transported flexible packaging material, the direction in which the first sealing mechanism seals the tubular packaging material is perpendicular to the transport direction. ;

~~an introducing unit that introduces the article to be packaged and the gas inside the flexible packaging material; and~~

~~a transverse sealing unit that seals the flexible packaging material in the transverse direction, perpendicular to the transport direction.~~

11. (Currently Amended) A packaging method for manufacturing a package wherein ~~[[an]]~~ a foodstuff article to be packaged and an inert ~~[[a]]~~ gas are sealed in a flexible packaging material, comprising steps of: ~~wherein:~~

providing a tubular packaging material;

supplying the article to be packaged in the tubular packaging material;

supplying the gas in the tubular packaging material;

sealing the tubular packaging material to manufacture a package containing the article and the gas; and

changing a temperature of the gas before or after the supplying of the gas in the tubular packaging material, such that the package is manufactured wherein the gas has having a temperature different from lower than that of the outside air when the gas and the article to be packaged are sealed.

12. (Currently Amended) A packaging system, comprising:

a packaging apparatus that manufactures a package wherein ~~[[an]]~~ a foodstuff article to be packaged and ~~[[a]]~~ an inert gas are sealed in a ~~flexible~~ packaging material, the packaging apparatus including

an introducing unit through which the article to be packaged and the gas are supplied to the packaging material formed in a tubular shape; and  
a first sealing mechanism that seals the tubular packaging material to produce a package containing the article and the gas; and

a gas temperature modifying unit ~~provided inside said packaging apparatus or provided separate from said packaging apparatus, and~~ that changes the temperature of the gas before ~~being~~ the gas is sealed in the package;

wherein,

~~said packaging apparatus manufactures the package wherein~~ the gas has having a temperature lower than that of ~~different from the~~ outside air when the gas and the article to be packaged are sealed.

13. (Original) The packaging system as recited in Claim 12, further comprising:  
a thermal application unit that performs thermal application processing on the manufactured package.

14. (Original) The packaging system as recited in Claim 13, wherein  
said thermal application unit has a thermostatic chamber that warms the package.

15. (Original) The packaging system as recited in Claim 13, wherein  
said thermal application unit blows hot air onto the package.

16. (Currently Amended) The packaging system as recited in ~~any one claim of Claim 13 through Claim 15~~, further comprising:  
a postprocessing checking apparatus that performs postprocessing checking of the package.

17. (Currently Amended) The packaging system as recited in Claim 16, further comprising:

a control unit that is configured to control ~~controls~~ said gas temperature modifying unit based on detection information produced by ~~in~~ said postprocessing checking apparatus.

18. (Currently Amended) The packaging system as recited in Claim 16, further comprising:

a control unit that is configured to control ~~controls~~ said thermal application unit based on detection information produced by ~~in~~ said postprocessing checking apparatus.